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TAGS: PREL PHUM KPAO KMDR ZI

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE'S GOVERNMENT MEDIA PLAY UP "PLOT"

**¶1.** Under the headline "American madness" the weekly ZANU-PF house organ "The People's Voice" (08/25) comments:

"The U.S. Government this week shamelessly went public about its plans to oust the democratically elected President of the Republic of Zimbabwe Robert Gabriel Mugabe, from power. This American madness has been witnessed in Cuba, Iraq, Libya, Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea among others. American bureaucrats forget that it is not their business to choose leaders of the countries of the world. This is the prerogative of the peoples of these countries by God's divine ruling. In exercising that exclusive prerogative, the people of Zimbabwe elected President Mugabe. . . ZANU PF, the government and people of Zimbabwe will stand up against any world power and their international network in defense of the country's national sovereignty and independence. No Western power is mighty enough to intimidate the heroic people of Zimbabwe.

"British and American citizens must be extremely worried that their governments have given themselves the Satanic role of spreading misery and strife throughout the world. Where other nations are striving for international progress and development, the British and American governments are being retrogressive because of their selfish and myopic interests. Zimbabwe and the progressive world in general, will not stand for that. The sooner the British and American governments realize that the better. The world will not tolerate a situation whereby the British and Americans speak so highly of people's democratic will but are quick to punish the same people when that democracy fails to yield pre-determined western results. . . Our government owes its allegiance not to the United States and Britain but to the people of Zimbabwe who elected it."

**¶2.** Under headline "Zimbabwe's neighbors humiliate U.S. Assistant Secretary" the pro-government weekly "The Sunday Mirror" (08/25) carried the following article on its "Media Focus" column on page 9:

"Not content with blasting Afghanistan's Tora Bora mountains to smithereens in search of an elusive Osama bin Laden, and planning on ejecting Iraqi strongmen Saddam Hussein from power, the U.S. has focused its interest on Zimbabwe. In flagrant violation of the principle that 'none of us can choose who leads governments or administrations in foreign countries,' the U.S. has endeavored to dabble in the politics of the country with the hope of instilling its own preferred candidate in the seat of government. In a humiliating slap in the face, Botswana, South Africa and Mozambique have shot down claims by the U.S. Secretary of State for Africa, Walter Kansteiner, that their governments had signed up to a U.S. plan to isolate President Robert Mugabe. . . The snub America has received from the region has exploded the myth that it has the influence to manipulate the political dynamics in the region in its favor, and with the moral blessing and active co-operation of the region itself. . ."

**¶3.** Under headline "Zimbabwe is not a colony" the government-controlled weekly "The Sunday News" (08/25) comments:

". . . Mr. Walter Kansteiner. . . told the world that the illegitimate Bush administration has

hatched a plot to topple the elected government of Zimbabwe. This is not news to most Africans. The only startling aspect of Mr. Kansteiner's utterances is that he actually found such racist nonsense newsworthy. . . The man either suffers from a severe strain of amnesia or is hopelessly addicted to the despicable pastime of political mischief. His own un-elected boss, President Bush, is an illegitimate leader who bulldozed his way to power by manipulating partisan Supreme Court judges appointed by his Republican Party. Any serious watchers of international politics would know that Mr. Bush was elected by judges whereas President Mugabe has the mandate of the people of Zimbabwe. . . We owe our legality, democracy and rule of law to none but ourselves. . . The confrontational stance adopted by Washington and London against Zimbabwe's land reform program is futile because the agrarian revolution is irreversible. The legitimacy of Zimbabwe's political system is neither decided by George Bush and Tony Blair nor by southern Africa's so-called regional powers. . . American and British politicians must be reminded that foreign interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign country is a clear violation of international law and norms. Any Western leader. . .who assumes that he can use his economic and military muscle to bully Zimbabweans into reversing the perfectly legal and morally justifiable land redistribution program is not being sincere to himself and his country. Zimbabwe is not a colony and Zimbabwe is not for sale."

14. Under headline "Zimbabwe will not be intimidated!" the government controlled daily (08/24) "Chronicle" comments:

". . .The reason behind (the American) resolve to see the Zimbabwe government out of office is that they backed the wrong horse at the last election, and that the government in power will not bow down to their evil machinations. The people of Zimbabwe are more than ready to defend their sovereignty and will not be intimidated by statements from people whose only pre-occupation is protecting the interests of a few white farmers at the expense of the black majority. . Where are the voices of the likes of Amnesty International and the United Nations? Do the landless majority of this country not have any rights? Would somebody know what happened to the Universal Bill of Rights. . .? It seems President Mugabe's only sin is to redistribute land to fellow blacks, and winning the elections when the Americans and the British gave him no chance. The new democracy through the barrel of a gun will not be tolerated, and the ganging up against the country only goes to show that imperialists cannot get over their colonial paternalism and disdain for African authority. . The Americans and the British are still to deliver on their promise of funding for land reforms made in 1979. For the record, our President has delivered a few months after elections. . We have not meddled in Washington's affairs and in the same spirit we hope the Americans steer clear of Harare and do not get caught up in their British cousins' nostalgia."

15. Under headline "Belligerent U.S. joins Zimbabwe's tormentors" the August 24 edition of the government-controlled daily "Chronicle" carried the following op-ed by Peter Baka Nyoni:

"After the British, the Europeans and the white Commonwealth and their attempts to force their own kind of change in Zimbabwe's political landscape over the last eight months without success, it has now fallen to the Americans to try their hand too. How frustrating it must be for little Zimbabwe to prove such a hard nut to crack for those who live outside it! The present American government is distinctly different from the one that preceded it. Bill Clinton had a human face to him. . . By contrast, the George W. Bush administration is a belligerent one. It only understands the language of war and threats. It has marked itself out on a mission to exhibit American power and might as the sole super-power of the world. . . Zimbabwe this week stands under the shadow of the most direct and menacing of the American threats. Where others have failed, the

mighty U.S. is not expected to fail. After all it is the world's last Big Brother that we have around.

"America's so-called Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act (ZDERA) has now been upon us for over six months. Under it we faced a select range of financial and immigration sanctions. . . The reality has proved a little more complicated. Thus the search is on for other and more effective ways to bring this stubborn government to its knees. For some strange and inexplicable reason, the internal revolt and mass uprising premised on the efforts of the internal political opposition have so far come to grief. It is common cause now that the opposition coalition is hopelessly divided and ineffectual. Its backbone, in the white farming community, has now been finally broken. . . Internally, the opposition is a lost cause. . . It is this realization that appears to have pushed the Americans to center stage in the fight against Zimbabwe. . ."

¶ 6. Under headline "United States spills the beans" the government-controlled daily "The Herald" (08/24) published the following editorial on page 8:

"The American government spilled the beans last week with their revelation that they are working with some 'independent' journalists in Zimbabwe to topple the ruling ZANU PF government. We have always known that the private media in this country was controlled from Britain and America and it comes as no surprise that the U. S. is confirming it. . . The U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Walter Kansteiner has exposed them for what they really are: shameless turncoats who are prepared to sell their own country to the highest bidder. It is indeed a sad chapter in Zimbabwe's media history as a new madness has gripped the privately owned Press. Instead of being the first line of defense of the country's sovereignty, values and dignity, they celebrate at its denigration and are even players in the process. . ."

Sullivan